

STATE SENATOR • MARK SCHAUER • 19TH DISTRICT

# Schauer Press Release



P.O. Box 30036 • Lansing • Michigan • 48909-7536 • 517-373-2426 • Fax: 517-373-2964  
E-mail: [senmschauer@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:senmschauer@senate.michigan.gov) • [www.senate.state.mi.us/dem/SD19](http://www.senate.state.mi.us/dem/SD19)

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CONTACT: Sen. Mark Schauer  
PHONE: 517-373-2426

## **Schauer Calls for Action on Meth Bills** ***Meth treatment at clinics quadrupled in last 10 years***

LANSING-Citing a report today released by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Sen. Mark Schauer (D-Battle Creek) is calling on lawmakers to take up legislation to protect the children of methamphetamine users.

“This report shows that use of this drug is reaching epidemic proportions,” said Schauer. “Children are more at risk than ever before; the time for action is now.”

A study released today by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration shows that drug treatment centers have experienced a substantial rise in the need for meth abuse treatment. From 1993 to 2003, the number of meth abusers treated in substance abuse clinics quadrupled nation-wide. This increase in meth use is particularly prevalent in the Midwest. In Jackson County, prosecutors have expressed concern over their ability to bring the appropriate charges to protect these children, especially as local production has increased.

“Exposing children to the perils of meth production endangers innocent, vulnerable lives and needs to be prosecuted accordingly,” said Schauer. “Meth use and production affects not just the users and sellers of the drugs but also their families, neighbors, and communities.”

This past April, Schauer introduced Senate Bill 439 that would update Michigan’s Child Protection Law to recognize the manufacture of illegal drugs, such as methamphetamine, in the presence of a child as Category 1 Child Neglect. A classification as a Category 1 Child Neglect case under Michigan’s Child Protection Law requires the state Department of Human Services to take specific steps, including court action, to protect the endangered child.

Sen. Schauer has called for action on this and similar bills many times, but the chair of the Senate Committee on Families and Human Services has not yet been willing to hold a hearing on the bill.

“This legislation is vital to a comprehensive public safety response to the growing menace of meth in our communities.”

Meth production in the presence of a child places that child’s health and welfare at an unreasonable risk. Children are exposed to a variety of health and safety risks, including the inhalation, absorption, or ingestion of toxic chemicals; exposure to fires and explosions; and various other dangers stemming from the hazardous lifestyle associated with meth production, such as the presence of booby traps, code violations, and poor ventilation.

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*Mark Schauer is the Senate Democratic Floor Leader. He represents the 19<sup>th</sup> Senate District, which includes all of Calhoun County and most of Jackson County.*

Editor’s Note: A copy of the report by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration is available at: <http://www.oas.samhsa.gov/2k6/methTx/methTX.cfm>